

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) today made the following comments ahead of President Obama's speech to a joint session of Congress on the ongoing health care reform effort.

"I hope that the President sticks to the core principles he laid out initially, to create a plan that offers security and stability to those who already have health insurance while offering a choice to those who are not currently insured. I hope that he sticks to his promise that the reforms be budget-neutral, and that they enact critical changes that will prevent insurance companies from discriminating against individuals with preexisting conditions. Most importantly, any plan for reform has to contain a mechanism to reign in the unsustainable cost of health care, which is affecting everyone who is paying for it.

"So far, the public option has been the only mechanism I have seen that I truly believe will lower these costs by creating a high-quality plan that costs less than what we're paying now. And when people choose that public plan they will be putting pressure on the private companies to bring their costs down too. Tonight we are going to hear the President call for different ideas. I'm willing to hear those too. But the final product has to comport with the President's initial principles and needs to truly bring costs down. No legislation would truly be reform, otherwise.

"I think the President has a great deal of credibility and popularity with the American people. I think his speech tonight will allow him to regain the high moral ground he established during his campaign and throughout his still-young presidency. I hope he'll be able to bring the more conservative Democrats into the fold, and I think we will be able to determine whether Republicans are going to play on this playground on this issue, or not. Tonight, I believe the President is going to put his foot down and demand that we have a bill that really respects the need for health care reform."

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